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## Plans for First Public Marina on the Hackensack River Unveiled by NJMC

LYNDHURST, N.J. –The Board of Commissioners of the New Jersey Meadowlands Commission today received preliminary plans for the future River Barge Park in Carlstadt, an environmentally-friendly site that will celebrate the history of the Hackensack River as well as its future.

“This park is going to be a fabulous place to explore the Hackensack River, delve into its natural beauty, and understand the importance of our waterways,” said NJMC Chairwoman Susan Bass Levin, also Commissioner of the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs. “The stories of this river’s recovery and the rebirth of the Meadowlands reach more people every time we increase opportunities to use this watershed for well thought out recreational purposes. As the public takes back ownership of the Hackensack River, our mission to develop this region sensibly grows stronger.”

Proposed plans include keeping the large “Barge” sign, a symbol of the site’s former incarnation as the Barge Club Restaurant, at the park’s entrance. The site will include sustainable design principals, such as car ports sheltered by solar panels and use of salvaged materials. Proposed boat houses for non-motorized boats and a storage facility for the NJMC’s pontoon and research vessels will be built using salvaged wood from the shuttered restaurant and a barge currently on the site.

The new park will also include drop-off and parking spaces for vehicles, boat trailers and buses; green spaces like classrooms, a maritime history trail and picnic areas; and wetland planting for shore edge stabilization. A new, 50-slip boat ramp will separate motorized and non-motorized boating vessels. A regional rowing center for high schools and colleges in the Meadowlands District, as well as paddle clubs, is also part of the design.

Other amenities for the site include native plants, interpretive signage, birding and wildlife trails and boardwalks, and a State Marine Police and New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection Conservation Facility.

River Barge Park will follow the New Jersey Clean Marina Program, where marina owners, yacht clubs, boatyards and boaters voluntarily adopt practices that help prevent

adverse impacts to water quality, sensitive habitats, and living resources in proximity to marinas.

“The designs presented today combine this location’s history as well as the future of the Meadowlands. The former Barge Club Restaurant was an iconic site for travelers along the Hackensack River, so it is only fitting that these designs recall that past,” said NJMC Commissioner James Anzevino. “The NJMC is entering a new era of instituting sustainable building practices and renewable energy across the Meadowlands, so this new destination for eco-tourism and education must also incorporate these elements as well.”

In 2005, the NJMC purchased the 4-acre site for \$3.1 million through funds from the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. At that time, the NJMC’s Board of Commissioners also allocated \$2.5 million to construct the new marina and park, as well as restore the first 45 acres of the 600-acre Richard P. Kane Natural Area, formerly known as the Empire Tract and adjacent to River Barge Park.

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